IMMORTALITY:

OR, THE

Conſolation of Human Life.

A

MONODY.

(Price One Shilling.)

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---------- Animi natura videtur
Atque animæ claranda meis jam verſibus eſſe:
Et metus ille foras præceps Acheruntis agendus
Funditus, humanam qui vitam turbat ab imo,
Omnia ſuffundens mortis nigrore. LUCR.

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MONODY.

ON

HUMAN LIFE.

TO

CONSOLATION.

OF THE

IMMORTALITY:

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OR, THE

Conſolation of Human Life.

A

MONODY.

I.

WHEN black-brow'd Night her duſky Mantle ſpread,
And wrapt in ſolemn Gloom the ſable Sky;
When ſoothing Sleep her opiate Dews had ſhed,
And ſeal'd in ſilken Slumbers ev'ry Eye:
My wakeful Thoughts admit no balmy Reſt,
Nor the ſweet Bliſs of ſoft Oblivion ſhare;
But watchful Woe diſtracts my aching Breaſt,
My Heart the Subject of corroding Care:
From Haunts of Men with wand'ring Steps and ſlow
I ſolitary ſteal, and ſooth my penſive Woe.

II.

Yet no fell Paſſion's rough diſcordant Rage
Untun'd the Muſic of my tranquil Mind;
Ambition's tinſell'd Charms could ne'er engage,
No Harbour there could ſordid Av'rice find:
From Luſt's foul ſpring my Grief diſdains to flow,
No Sighs of Envy from my Boſom break,
But ſoft Compaſſion melts my Soul to woe,
And ſocial Tears faſt trickle down my Cheek;
Ah me! when Nature gives one general Groan,
Each Heart muſt beat with Woe, each Voice reſponſive moan.

III.

Where'er I caſt my moiſt'ned Eyes around,
Or ſtretch my Proſpect o'er the diſtant Land,
There foul *Corruption*'s tainted Steps are found,
And *Death* grim-viſag'd waves his iron Hand.
Tho' now ſoft *Pleaſure* gild the ſmiling Scene,
And ſportive *Joy* call forth her feſtive Train,
Sinking in Night each vital Form is ſeen,
Like air-blown Bubbles on the wat'ry Plain;
* Fell *Death*, like brooding *Harpy*, the Repaſt
Will ſnatch with Talons foul, or ſour its grateful Taſte.

IV. Ye

* Vid. VIRG. Æn. L. 3. V. 210. & ſeq.

IV.

Ye ſmiling Glories of the youthful Year,
That ope your fragrant Boſoms to the Day,
That clad in all the Pride of Spring appear,
And ſteep'd in Dew your ſilken Leaves diſplay:
In *Nature*'s richeſt Robes tho' thus bedight,
Tho' her ſoft Pencil trace your various Dye,
Tho' lures your roſeate Hue the charmed Sight,
Tho' Odours ſweet your nect'rous Breath ſupply,
Soon on your Leaves *Time*'s cank'rous Tooth ſhall prey,
Your dulcet Dews exhale, your beauteous Bloom decay.

V.

Ye hedge-row Elms, beneath whoſe ſpreading Shade
The grazing Herds defy the ratt'ling Shower;
Ye lofty Oaks, in whoſe wide Arms diſplay'd,
The clam'rous Rook builds high his airy Bower;
Stript by hoar Winter's rough inclement Rage,
In mournful Heaps your leafy Honours lie,
Ev'n your hard Ribs ſhall feel the Force of Age,
And your bare Trunks the friendly Shade deny;
No more by chearful Vegetation green,
Your ſapleſs Bolls ſhall ſink, and quit th' evanid Scene.

VI.

Ye feather'd Warblers of the vernal Year
That careleſs ſing, nor fear the Frowns of Fate,
Tune your ſad Notes to Death and Winter drear!
Ill ſuit theſe mirthful Strains your tranſient State.
No more with chearful Song nor ſprightly Air
Salute the Bluſhes of the riſing Day,
With doleful Ditties, drooping Wings repair
To the lone Covert of the nightly Spray;
Where love-lorn *Philomela* ſtrains her Throat,
Surround the budding Thorn, and ſwell the mournful Note.

VII.

Come ſighing Elegy, with ſweeteſt Airs
Of melting Muſic teach my Grief to flow,
I too muſt mix my ſad Complaint with theirs,
Our Fates are equal, equal be our Woe.
Come, *Melancholy*, ſpread thy Raven Wing,
And in thy ebon Car, by Fancy led,
To the dark Charnel Vault thy Vot'ry bring,
The murky Manſions of the mould'ring Dead,
Where dank Dews breathe, and taint the ſickly Skies,
Where in ſad loathſome Heaps all human Glory lies.

VIII. Wrapt

VIII.

Wrapt in the Gloom of uncreated Night
Secure we ſlept in ſenſeleſs Matter's Arms,
Nor Pain could vex, nor pallid Fear affright,
Our quiet Fancy felt no Dream's Alarms.
Soon as to Life our animated Clay
Awakes, and conſcious Being opes our Eyes,
Care's fretful Family at once diſmay,
With ghaſtly air a thouſand Phantoms riſe,
Sad *Horror* hangs o'er all the deep'ning gloom,
Grief prompts the labour'd Sigh, *Death* opes the marble Tom

IX.

Yet Life's ſtrong Love intoxicates the Soul,
And Thirſt of Bliſs inflames the fev'rous Mind,
With eager Draughts we drain the pois'nous Bowl,
And in the Dregs the Cordial hope to find.
O Heav'n! for this light End were Mortals made,
And plac'd on Earth, with Happineſs in view,
To catch with cheated Graſp the flitting Shade,
And with vain Toil the fancied Form purſue,
Then give their ſhort-liv'd Being to the Wind,
As the wing'd Arrow flies, and leaves no Track behind!

X.

Thus lonely wand'ring thro' the nightly Shade
Againſt the ſtern Decrees of ſtubborn Fate,
To mockful Echo my Complaints I made,
Of Life's ſhort Period, or its toilſome State.
'Tis death-like Silence all, no Sound I hear,
Save the hoarſe Raven croaking from the Sky,
Or ſcaly Beetle murm'ring thro' the Air,
Or Screech-owl ſcreaming with ill-omen'd Cry;
Save when with brazen Tongue from yon high Tow'r
The Clock deep-ſounding ſpeaks, and counts the paſſing Hour.

XI.

Pale Cynthia mounted on her Silver Car
O'er Heav'n's blue Concave drives her nightly Round;
See a torn Abbey, wrapt in Gloom, appear
Scatter'd in wild Confuſion o'er the Ground.
Here rav'nous *Ruin* lifts her waſteful Hands
O'er briar-grown Grots and bramble-ſhaded Graves;
Safe from her Wrath one weeping Marble ſtands,
O'er which the mournful Yew its Umbrage waves;
Ope, ope thy pond'rous Jaws, thou friendly Tomb,
Cloſe the ſad deathful Scene, and ſhroud me in thy Womb!

XII. Forth

XII.

Forth iſſuing lovely from the gloomy Shade,
Which ſtately Pines in Phalanx deep compoſe,
Fair above Mortals comes a ſmiling Maid
To ſooth my Sighs, and cheer my heart-felt Woes.
Here nurs'd by *Contemplation*, Matron ſage,
Where with mute *Solitude* ſhe loves to dwell,
In Truth's fair Lore ſhe form'd her early Age,
And trim'd the midnight Lamp in lonely Cell,
Here learn'd clear Reaſon's heav'n-ſprung Light to raiſe
O'er Paſſion's low-born Miſts, or Pleaſure's ſpurious Blaze.

XIII.

Her azure Mantle flows with eaſy Grace,
Nor Faſhion's Folds conſtrain, nor Cuſtom's Tye;
An optic Tube ſhe bears, each Sphere to trace
That rolls its rapid Orbit round the Sky:
Yet not to Heav'n alone her View's confin'd;
A clear reflecting Plane ſhe holds, to ſhow
The various Movements of the reas'ning Mind,
How ſtrange Ideas link, and Habits grow,
Paſſion's fierce Impulſe, Will's free Power to ſcan,
To paint the featur'd Soul, and mark th' internal Man.

XIV.

Whence theſe ſad Strains, ſaid ſhe, of plaintive Grief,
Which pierce the ſleep-clos'd Ear of peaceful *Reſt?*
Oft has the ſick'ning Mind here found relief,
Here quell'd the throbbing Tumults of the Breaſt:
Lift up thy loaden Eyes to yon fair Cloud,
Where moon-ſprung * *Iris* blends her beauteous Dyes:
I lift them ſoon, and as I gazing ſtood,
The fleeting Phantom in a Moment flies;
Where beam'd the gilded Arch of gaudy Hue,
Frowns the dark low'ring Cloud all gloomy to the View.

XV.

Life's Emblem fit, ſaid I, that roſcid Bow!
The gay illuſive Pageant of an Hour
To real Semblance tricks her airy Show,
Then ſinks in Night's dull Arms, and is no more!
Ah! Fool, ſaid ſhe, tho' now to Fancy's Sight
The Violet pale, the bluſhing Red decays,
Tho' now no painted Cloud reflect the Light,
Nor Drops priſmatic break the falling Rays,
Yet ſtill the Colours live, tho' none appear,
Glow in the darting Beam that gilds yon Cryſtal Sphere.

XVI. Then

* A Rainbow form'd by the Rays of the Moon at Night: an Ob-

XVI.

Then let not *Fancy* with her vagrant Blaze
Miſlead in trackleſs Paths of wild Deceit;
On Reaſon's ſteady Lamp ſtill ardent gaze,
Led by her ſober Light to Truth's Retreat.
Tho' wond'ring Ign'rance ſees each Form decay,
The breathleſs Bird, bare Trunk, and ſhrivel'd Flow'r;
New Forms ſucceſſive catch the vital Ray,
Sing their wild Notes, or ſmile th' allotted Hour,
And ſearch Creation's ample Circuit round,
Tho' Modes of Being change, all Life's immortal found.

XVII.

See the ſlow Reptile grov'ling o'er the Green,
That trails thro' ſlimy Paths its cumbrous Load,
Start in new Beauty from the lowly Scene,
And wing with flutt'ring Pride th' ætherial Road;
Burſt their Shell-priſons, ſee the feather'd Kind,
Where in dark Durance pent awhile they lie,
Diſpread their painted Plumage to the Wind,
Bruſh the briſk Air, ſwift ſhooting thro' the Sky,
Hail with their choral Hymns the new-born Day,
Diſtend their joy-ſwoln Breaſts, and carol the ſweet Lay.

XVIII.

See Man thro' varied Periods fixt by Fate
Aſcend Perfection's Scale by ſlow Degree;
The plant-like Fœtus quits its ſenſeleſs State,
And helpleſs hangs ſweet-ſmiling on the Knee;
Soon outward Objects ſteal into the Brain,
Next pratt'ling Childhood liſps with mimic Air,
Then Mem'ry links her fleet ideal Train,
And ſober Reaſon riſes to compare,
The full-grown Breaſt ſome manly Paſſion warms,
It pants for Glory's Meed, or beats to Love's Alarms.

XIX.

Then ſay ſince Nature's high Beheſt appears
That living Forms ſhould change of Being prove,
In which new Joy the novel Scene endears,
New Objects riſe to pleaſe, new Wings to move;
Since Man too taught by ſage Experience knows
His Frame revolving treads Life's varying Stage,
That the Man-plant firſt vegetating grows,
Then Senſe directs, then Reaſon rules in Age;
Say is it ſtrange, ſhould Death's all-dreaded Hour
Waft to ſome unknown Scenes, or wake ſome untried Pow'r?

XX.

The wiſe Creator wrapt in fleſhly Veil
The Ray divine, the pure ætherial Mate;
Tho' worn by Age the brittle Fabric fail,
The ſmiling Soul ſurvives the Frowns of Fate:
Each circling Year, each quick-revolving Day
Touches with mould'ring Tooth thy flitting Frame,
With furtive Slight repairs th' unſeen Decay;
For ever changing, yet in change the ſame,
Oft haſt thou dropt unhurt thy mortal Part,
Dare the grim Terror then, nor dread his guiltleſs Dart.

XXI.

The twinkling eye, whoſe various humour'd Round
Takes in ſoft Net th' inverted Form behind,
The liſt'ning Ears, that catch the waving Sound,
Are but mere Organs of the feeling Mind:
External Matter thus can lend its Aid,
And diſtant Shapes with foreign Pow'r ſupply;
Thus the long Tube by *Galilæo* made
Brings home the wonders of the peopled Sky:
The Pow'r percipient then feels no Decay,
Tho' blind the Tube, and Darkneſs blot the viſual Ray.

XXII. When

XXII.

When lock'd in ſhort Suſpence by Sleep's ſoft pow'r
In temporary Death the Senſes lie,
When ſolemn Silence reigns at Midnight Hour,
Deaf the dull Ear, and clos'd the curtain'd Eye;
Objects of Senſe, each conſcious Senſe aſleep,
With lively Image ſtrike the wakeful Soul,
Some frowning Rock that threats the foaming Deep,
Or wood-hung Vale, where ſtreams mæand'ring roll,
Some long-loſt Friend's returning Voice you hear,
Claſp the life-pictur'd Shade, and drop the trickling Tear.

XXIII.

Each outward Organ, as Ideas riſe,
Gives eaſy Entrance to the motley Train;
Reflection calm, with retroſpective Eyes
Surveys her Treaſures in the formful Brain;
Tho' Death relentleſs ſhed his baleful Dew,
In Lethe dip each Form-conveying Pow'r,
Unhurt Reflection may her Themes purſue,
Smile at the Ruin, ſafe amidſt her Store;
Without one Senſe's Aid in Life's low Vale,
Fancy can furniſh Joys, and Reaſon lift her Scale.

XXIV.

Thus the lone Lover in the penſive Shade
In Day-dreams rapt of ſoft ecſtatic Bliſs,
Purſues in Thought the viſionary Maid,
Feaſts on the fancy'd Smile, and favour'd Kiſs:
Thus the young Poet at the cloſe of Day
Led by the Magic of ſome Fairy Song
Thro' the dun Umbrage winds his heedleſs Way,
Nor hears the babbling Brook that brawls along:
Thus deathleſs *Newton* deaf to Nature's Cries
Would meaſure *Time* and *Space*, and travel 'round the Skies.

XXV.

When juſt expiring hangs Life's trembling Light,
And fell Diſeaſe ſtrikes deep the deadly Dart,
Reaſon and Mem'ry burn with Ardour bright,
And gen'rous Paſſions warm the throbbing Heart;
Oft will the vig'rous Soul in Life's laſt Stage
With keeneſt Reliſh taſte pure mental Joys:
Since the fierce Efforts of Diſtemper's Rage
Nor 'bates her Vigour, nor her Pow'rs deſtroys,
Say, ſhall her Luſtre Death itſelf impair?
When in high Noon ſhe rides, then ſet in dark Deſpair?

XXVI.

Tho' through the Heart no purple Tide ſhould flow,
No quiv'ring Nerve ſhould vibrate to the Brain,
The mental Pow'rs no mean dependance know;
Thought may ſurvive, and each fair Paſſion reign:
As when *Lucina* ends the pangful Strife,
Lifts the young Babe, and lights her lambent Flame,
Some Pow'rs new-waking hail the dawning Life,
Some unſuſpended live, unchang'd the ſame;
So from our Duſt freſh Faculties may bloom,
Some poſthumous may live, and triumph o'er the Tomb.

XXVII.

This fibrous Frame by Nature's kindly Law,
Which gives each Joy to keen Senſation here,
O'er purer Scenes of Bliſs the Veil may draw,
And cloud Reflection's more exalted Sphere.
When Death's cold Hand with all-diſſolving Pow'r
Shall the cloſe Tie with friendly Stroke unbind,
Alike our mortal as our natal Hour
May to new Being wake the riſing Mind;
On Death's new genial Day the Soul may riſe,
Born to ſome higher Life, and hail ſome brighter Skies.

XXVIII.

The moſs-grown Tree, that ſhrinks with rolling Years,
The drooping Flow'rs that die ſo ſoon away,
Let not thy Heart alarm with boding Fears,
Nor thy own Ruin date from their Decay:
The bluſhing Roſe that breathes the balmy Dew
No pleaſing Tranſports of Perception knows,
The rev'rend Oak, that circling Springs renew,
Thinks not, nor by long Age experienc'd grows;
Thy Fate and theirs confeſs no kindred Tie,
Tho' their frail Forms may fade, ſhall Senſe and Reaſon die?

XXIX.

Nor let Life's Ills, that in dire Circle rage,
Steal from thy heaving Breaſt thoſe labour'd Sighs;
Theſe, the kind Tutors of thy Infant Age,
Train the young Pupil for the future Skies;
Unſchool'd in early Prime, in riper Years
Wretched and ſcorn'd ſtill ſtruts the bearded Boy;
The tingling Rod bedew'd with briny Tears
Shoots forth in graceful Fruits of manly Joy:
The painful Cares that vex the toilſom Spring
Shall plenteous Crops of Bliſs in Life's laſt Harveſt bring.

XXX. She

XXX.

She ceas'd, and vaniſh'd into ſightleſs Wind - - - -
O'er my torn breaſt alternate Paſſions ſway,
Now Doubt deſponding damps the wav'ring Mind,
Now Hope reviving ſheds her chearful Ray.
Soon from the Skies in heav'nly white array'd,
Faith to my Sight reveal'd, fair Cherub! ſtood,
With Life replete the Volume ſhe diſplay'd,
Seal'd with the ruddy Stains of crimſon Blood;
Each Fear now ſtarts away, as Spectres fly
When the Sun's orient Beam firſt gilds the purple Sky.

XXXI.

Meanwhile the faithful Herald of the Day
The Village Cock crows loud with Trumpet ſhrill,
The warbling Lark ſoars high, and Morning grey
Lifts her glad Forehead o'er the cloud-wrapt Hill:
Nature's wild Muſic fills the vocal Vale;
The bleating Flocks that bite the dewy Ground,
The lowing Herds that graze the Woodland Dale,
And cavern'd Echo, ſwell the chearful Sound;
Homeward I bend with clear unclouded Mind,
Mix with the buſy World, and leave each Care behind.

11:7:19

FINIS.